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BRANCH OF SANITARY COMMISSION.

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

NEW-ENGLAND

Women's Auxiliary Association,

No. 22, SUMMER STREET,

BOSTON.

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*Jan. 29, 1863*



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---

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## CONNECTICUT.

*Hartford* — Mrs. S. J. Cowen.



The Annual Meeting of this Association was held, at the Music Hall, Boston, on Wednesday, January 7, 1863, at 7½ o'clock.

In the absence of the President, Dr. HOWE, Vice President, occupied the chair. He opened the Meeting with a few fitting and earnest remarks.

The Secretary read the Reports for the year, of the Executive, Industrial, and Financial Committees.

After which, Dr. HOWE introduced Dr. BELLOWS, President of the Sanitary Commission, who occupied an hour in setting forth the principles and modes of action of the Commission. He spoke most warmly and gratefully of the aid furnished by New England; and confirmed the conviction in the minds of those who heard him, that their bounty had been well bestowed.

The Reports alluded to are herewith presented.

# REPORT.

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The Executive Committee of the NEW-ENGLAND WOMEN'S AUXILIARY ASSOCIATION, in presenting its first Annual Report, would avail of the opportunity to bear heartfelt testimony to the wisdom, liberality, and patriotism that have characterized the contributions of New England to the Sanitary Commission. The year's work has been a success. Let all who have aided in producing the great result, remember this; not in any spirit of boastfulness, but with an humble sense of gratitude to God, who has permitted them to share the labors, and enjoy the reward.

When, a year ago, we began this work, it was in the belief that a few months would see it ended, but today, as we review the past, and look forward to the probable future, we see how little we understood the character of the struggle in which our country was involved. Indeed, who has rightly estimated the length and severity of the war? Who will venture, even now, to say when the end shall be? But until this can be foretold, the duration of our work cannot be measured, for it must continue till the last battle is ended; yes, longer than that, even until the last sufferer is restored to health, or comforted in his dying hours, as far as human aid can help him then.

A few weeks since, one of the members of this Committee went to Washington at the request of Mr. Olmsted, to consult with him,

and others engaged in the same work, as to the best means of increasing the supplies furnished to the Sanitary Commission. She went informed of all the doubts that could be raised, and every rumor to the discredit of the Commission, that carelessness or malice could circulate; determined, if possible, not to allow the interest of the work to blind her to mistakes that might be made in it. The amplest opportunity was afforded by the Commissioners for examining their methods, and the results thereof; and most convincing facts were found to disprove every doubt presented; while it seemed impossible to find ground on which to fabricate a story of cruelty or neglect. Are all human undertakings imperfect? Then the Sanitary Commission must be at fault somewhere. But the honor, the philanthropy, the good sense of its managers, forbid all who know them, to believe that there can be any wilful error, or any serious mistake.

Among the many questions for which our delegate was asked to seek answers, were some of general interest, and we take leave to notice them here.

1. "What is Government doing for our sick and wounded soldiers?"

It is spending an immense amount of money in providing extra surgeons and nurses, medicines, surgical instruments, hospital furniture, cooking utensils, and a partial supply of beds, bedding, clothing, and stores.

2. "Why does not Government do *all*?"

Simply because it cannot, with the means it has at hand for this purpose. How shall it increase these means? Not by throwing more labor and responsibility on the already overburdened departments; but by availing of some channel not already overwhelmed by the pressure of the fight. Such a channel existed. The Sanitary Commissioners were in the field almost as soon as the first soldiers. They were at the disposal of Government. It accepted their services, thereby making them a part of the great whole. Thus, then, in a very true sense, the Sanitary Commission is an arm



of Government ; acting harmoniously with it and its officers, seeking not to supplant, but to supplement it, not weakening it by a divided authority, but strengthening it by simple-hearted, earnest coöperation.

3. "Why can the Commission do this work better than any State or local agency?"

Because it is an "arm of Government," and therefore works for the whole country. And because Government has granted it facilities that could not be given to any narrower agency. The most pressing need of the men is, of course, felt directly after a battle. Then, a feather's weight may turn the balance for life or death. Here, on the bloody field, before the roar of the artillery has ceased, stand the agents of the Commission, with, may we say, an *exhaustless* supply of the means of saving life, and relieving suffering? Ah! that word "exhaustless," depends on you and me, and each loyal non-combatant in our land. But there they stand, ready to relieve all the sufferers,—if we have furnished the means for all,—knowing no difference between Maine men and Iowans, for are they not equally fighting for a common cause, and entitled to share equally in a common relief? Which men shall come first under their care? Thank God! *they* say "those suffering most; those whom one-half hour of delay will send out of the reach of human care and sympathy forever." Is there a mother, a wife, a sister, a loving woman in our land, who will not bless the Sanitary Commission for this human view? Or would each one who has given her dearest to her country, prefer to trust him in that hour of peril, to her State's agent, who might go about, losing golden moments, in searching here and there for men, who, in a time of peace, gladly brought their identity within the limits of a State boundary, but who, at their country's call, nobly merged all minor differences in one hope, one faith,—Liberty and Union. But this is not the extent of the inadequacy of any sectional aid. It cannot be had on the battle-field, even for its own exclusive objects of care. The Commission keeps up a regular communication with the generals in command, who call upon it to

establish its depots of supply near each advancing division; and as the base of operations changes from time to time, the commissioners are notified to change their depots, keeping always as near the front as possible. And again, Government has, as we have said, afforded to the Commission every possible facility for transportation, which is so difficult in the confusion inseparable from a great battle. It is obvious that no limited agency could share these inestimable advantages. Thus practically, as well as by authority of Government, this work rests with the Sanitary Commission, and must be left undone, if it has not the means of doing it. So all questions are resolved into one, which it concerns us deeply to ponder, and faithfully to answer. Shall the Commission be enabled to do the work thoroughly? Consider, for a moment, that it cannot "levy taxes," that it has no "revenue," of any sort or kind, but what is furnished by the volunteer contributors of the North, and can we escape the conviction that we, personally and collectively, are charged with a terrible responsibility; that the saving of many lives rests with us, that the relief of untold agony is in our hands? Friends, fellow-workers, the time for considering this work as something we may choose or refuse is past. It ended at the moment when we accepted the war as no play, but a bitter, to very many of us, a life-long reality. At that moment, our share of the trial ceased to be anything but a solemn duty, no less solemn, indeed, than the duty of fighting to vindicate those sacred rights, for which we can only work and pray. Are we ready to accept this responsibility? If so, let us, at the beginning of a new year, renew and deepen our pledge to place our offerings on the altar of Federal Union, and a common cause. Our whole power, wisely bestowed, will do all that the occasion requires, but anything less than this, will leave things undone that we shall not like to think of when the distractions of the hour are past, and we are left face to face with Eternal Justice, alone. But we do not mean to lay up grievous memories. The quick current bears us on, yet not too fast to allow us time to realize what we ought to do, and to do it. The Sanitary Commis-

sion asks our hearty coöperation ; it gives reasons for its plea. Let us weigh those reasons carefully, and in the spirit of self-forgetfulness ; remembering how grave is the subject with which we have to deal.

The contributions of the year have been from cities, towns, and villages, scattered throughout New England. To a large extent they have been furnished by societies formed for the very purpose. We are in correspondence with 750 such societies, and it is greatly to be desired, that one should now be formed in every place not already coöperating in this way.

A member of each society is usually constituted our regular correspondent, from whom we learn of the state of affairs in her neighborhood, and who asks of us such information as is needed there, and which we are constantly receiving from Washington. In this way, any request made from Washington, is circulated through the country without delay, and every sewing-circle may know at once what is most needed ; so that not one unneeded stitch may be set. The recent organization of a general sewing-circle, in Boston, has proved, beyond question, that large cities as well as small villages, may work to advantage in this way. And let us here make grateful mention of the invaluable aid rendered by our Associate Managers. Numbering nearly one hundred, and living in various parts of New England, they have come into personal relations with thousands of our fellow-workers, who could not have been reached effectually by letters only ; meeting their doubts, spreading special as well as general information about the Commission, and keeping us informed of the condition of the work. Individual aid, too, has been offered us in every shape, and to an unlimited extent. Scores of friends meet daily at 22, Summer Street, to unpack, assort, re-pack, and forward supplies. All these operations involve the keeping of many books, and the writing of a vast number of letters. Every gift that comes accompanied by the donor's name, is at once acknowledged. Thousands of dollars, hundreds of thousands of articles, pass through our office ; and no single thing has, as yet, been



lost. Can we fitly acknowledge the value of the volunteer aid that has secured such a result? Nor can we do any justice to the assistance rendered us in all other possible ways. The commodious rooms which we occupy have been generously furnished by their owner, without cost or charge. The city (and as far as we have sought their aid, the country) newspapers have been our friends, helping us to reach the public as no other method could. A great deal of our freight has been carried entirely free; very much at reduced rates, and now to crown the year with generous deeds, and fill the cup of our gratitude to the very brim, the corporations of all the railroads centering in Boston, with their branches, and many of their connections, have given permission to our contributors to send all freight over those roads without cost, if marked distinctly for "N. E. W. A. A., 22, Summer Street, Boston." The little boy comes to spend the hours of his holiday in working with us; the woman who has nothing to give but her needle, places that at our service, — and so on, and so on, — forgive us that we attempt the impossible work of recounting the blessings showered upon the New-England Women's Auxiliary Association in the year that has passed. Already we have lingered too long over the pleasant theme; but we cannot close without saying a word of the future.

The Commissioners have asked New England to aid them in the supply of the Newberne, and some other coast troops, and to lend a helping hand to the army of the Potomac. The West has its own heavy burdens to bear. It is doing its share of the work nobly, under the charge of resident and travelling commissioners. Occasionally it needs our help, but in the main, can provide for the troops stationed within its own reach. So far as this can be done, it is better not to incur the immense expense of western transportation. Every cent spent needlessly in freight charges is lost to the great cause. The work is best done by those nearest at hand. We then expect our contributions to be chiefly used for the coast and the army of the Potomac. Freight comes free to us, as we have



said, over many roads. Everything sent from us, goes coastwise, free also. And thus the contributions of the interior can be landed on the shores of North Carolina without charge, except when passing over other railroads than those indicated. Undoubtedly, railroad corporations in the other New-England States will afford facilities for free transportation within their State limits, as Massachusetts roads have done. For freight to Washington the charge is very small, and the hundreds of dollars saved monthly, in this way, will go far to lighten the greatly-increased expense of materials of every kind, and of hospital supplies.

The past has done bravely; but the future has larger demands in store. The increase of the army, with added months of hardship and disaster, claim greater activity on the part of all who would serve the suffering soldiers. At times, a shade of discouragement seems to hang over the work. But a new year brings fresh hope in every right undertaking, and justice to the past forbids us to be lacking in hope for the future.

Respectfully submitted by the

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

JANUARY, 1863.

NOTE. — In order to afford Dr. BELLOWS as much time as possible, for his Address, more than one-half of the preceding Report was omitted, in the reading at the public meeting.



	RECEIVED.	FORWARDED.					TRANS. D. WEBSTER.
		WASH- INGTON.	WEST AND S. WEST, VIA PHILA.	NEW- BERNE.	ST. LOUIS. LOUISV'LE.	SHIP ISL.	
Dried Fruit . . . . .	126	105	2	4			22
Fresh Fruit . . . . .	204	120	1	51			1
Pickles . . . . .	62	50	3				2
Wines . . . . .	307	242	34	17			
HOSPITAL STORES; viz., —							
Jellies,							
Preserves,							
Condensed Milk,							
Farinaceous,							
Beefstock,							
Ten,							
Sugar,							
Cocoa, &c.,							
Herbs,							
Sirups,							
Tamarinds,							
Domestic Wines,							
Cases . . . . .	770	602	42	33	2	58	18
MISCELLANEOUS; viz., —							
Instruments,							
Cotton Cloth,							
Flannel,							
Oil Silk,							
India Rubber,							
Tin Cups, &c.,							
Fans,							
Games,							
Tobacco,							
Combs, &c.							
Stationery,							
Sponges,							
Cases . . . . .	237	144	15			5	15

We have also distributed the following articles:—

*Convalescent Camp, Annapolis.* 26 boxes books.

*Hospital, Newport News.* 2 boxes bandages, 3 boxes stores.

„ *Point Lookout.* 2 boxes books, 7 boxes old linen, 173 pairs slippers.

„ *Georgetown.* 7 boxes books, 2 boxes wine.

„ *Fortress Monroe.* 1 box ———

„ *Beaufort.* 8 boxes stores, 2 boxes books.

„ *Portsmouth Grore, R. I.* 431 pillow-cases, 58 flannel shirts, 52 flannel drawers, 50 pairs socks, 25 quilts, 3 cases lint.

*New-England Relief Rooms, N. Y.* 73 canes and crutches.

*Mississippi Flotilla.* 4 boxes books.

*Fort Columbus, Ohio.* 100 pairs mittens.

*Fort Warren.* 9 pairs mittens.

*1st Massachusetts Cavalry.* 400 pairs mittens, 597 caps.

*12th Massachusetts Volunteers.* 275 pairs mittens.

*28th* „ „ 100 pairs mittens.

*24th* „ „ 58 work-bags, 230 havelocks.

*44th* „ „ 15 bedsacks, 10 blankets, 10 quilts, 20 flannel shirts, 20 pillow-cases, 40 sheets, 10 pillows, 12 cot. shirts.

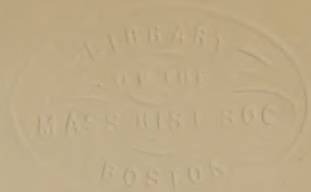
*To Mr. Olmsted, Transport James River.* 1,526 cotton shirts, 1,199 cotton drawers.

*W. Platt, jun., Philadelphia, for Chambersburg.* 968 pillow-cases, 390 pairs cotton drawers, 140 flannel shirts.

*Given to Individuals, and the Hospitals, Boston.* 72 flannel shirts, 44 flannel drawers, 239 pairs socks, 190 cotton shirts, 2 quilts, 1 pillow, 3 pillow-cases, 534 towels, 7 sheets, 3 wrappers, 12 pairs mittens, 30 pairs cotton drawers, 8 handkerchiefs, 12 under-vests, 50 caps, 31 pairs slippers, 130 fans, 2 boxes books, 4 boxes stores, lint, bandages, and old cotton and linen.

*Special Boxes.*—150 boxes.





## First Annual Report of the Industrial Committee,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DEC. 12, 1862.

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We have cut, during the year, 34,142 articles, consisting of 5,709 flannel drawers; 8,787 flannel shirts; 227 pairs slippers; 5,353 bed-sacks; 167 pillow-sacks; 65 woolen caps; 1,176 cotton shirts; 425 cotton-flannel drawers; 9,504 cotton drawers; 108 handkerchiefs; 49 towels; 141 sheets; 16 pillow-cases; 5 dressing-gowns; and 410 paper patterns. These patterns have been distributed to the public, to assist them in making garments the right size and shape. All the above-named articles have been made gratuitously, some by sewing societies, and very many by poor women, who are paid for their work by benevolent ladies and gentlemen. We have received the following very acceptable donations of material,—9 bales and 1 piece of flannel; 2 bales and 5 pieces of cotton; 3 cases, 1 bale, and 7 pieces of bed-ticking; 8 pieces of cotton flannel; 50 skeins of yarn; 9 dozen handkerchiefs; 3 pieces crash, for towels; and a lot of pieces of carpeting, for slippers. We have spent for materials, \$22,081.71, as follows,—for flannel, \$14,906.27; for buttons, tape, thread, &c., \$559.47; for silecia, \$524.63; for paper for patterns, \$28.22; for cotton, \$2,564.94; and for ticking for bed and pillow-sacks, \$3,498.18.

All of which is most respectfully submitted by

MRS. FRANK W. ANDREWS, CHAIRMAN.

*The NEW-ENGLAND WOMEN'S AUXILIARY ASSOCIATION (United-States Sanitary Commission)*

**Dr.** *in account, to Dec. 12, 1862, with GEO. HIGGINSON, Treasurer.* **Cr.**

To Cash paid —		By cash received —	
For materials for garments and bedding	\$21,989.59	Of sundry individuals and societies . . .	\$25,861.33
" surgical instruments and appliances . .	510.61	" sundry persons — proceeds of theatrical, musical, and other entertainments	3,085.44
" "Daniel Webster," hospital steamship .	1,603.59	" J. Huntington Wolcott, treasurer of Boston branch U. S. Sanitary Com.	3,000.00
" edibles — forwarded to Washington . .	1,069.23	" children's fairs, held at various places .	366.53
" hospital stores — forwarded to Newberne	1,272.67		
" freight on sundries, transported by rail .	1,587.51		
" expenses at rooms, 22, Summer Street, including fuel, stationery, printing, wages of porter, carpenter-work, &c. .	1,977.95		
" cooperage and truckage . . . . .	569.44		
Balance to new account . . . . .	*1,732.81		
	<u>\$32,313.30</u>		<u>\$32,313.30</u>
		Dec. 12, 1862.	
		By balance, in hands of treasurer . . .	\$1,732.81
		(E. E.)	
		GEO. HIGGINSON, <i>Treasurer.</i>	
		Boston, Dec. 12, 1862.	

\* NOTE. — \$1,000 of this balance was appropriated for the purchase of materials for bed-sacks before the year ended. Also, \$500 for repairs on rooms.



